

UTA School of Social Work

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

FEBRUARY IN REVIEW

Thrive Here, Thrive Forever!




Empowering Change
Women Shaping Social
Work Today

Guest: Marcela Nava





Watch Season 4 Episode 3 of Courtyard Conversations and read the stories below.

Video edited and hosted by Douglas Gutierrez



Dean of the School of Social Work, Dr. Kirk A. Foster

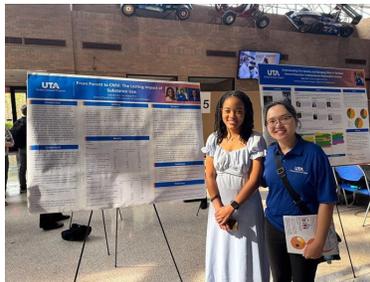
Social Work dean begins term as SSWR president

By Jaelon Jackson

The dean of the School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington began his two-year term as President of the Society for Social Work and Research February 1.

In addition to heading one of the nation's largest schools of social work, Dr. Kirk A. Foster will lead this premier international research association of over 2,000 members made up of social workers, social welfare professionals, social work students, and social work faculty and researchers.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT DEAN FOSTER'S NEW POSITION IN SSWR](#)



Cydnee Lacy, UTA School of Social Work BSW student (left), and Dr. Hui Huang, an associate professor in the UTA School of Social Work, pose for a photo at the 2025 JUTA McNair Symposium. (Photo by Cydnee Lacy)

From First-Generation Student to Ivy League Scholar: Cydnee Lacy's Journey Through Social Work

By Thomas Johns

Cydnee Lacy, UTA School of Social Work Student, began her college career with no clear roadmap, blueprint or idea just how far her journey would take her. Now, as a senior in the on the cusp of receiving her Bachelor of Social Work, she's preparing for her next chapter: earning her Master of Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania with a well-earned scholarship.

A first-generation college student, Lacy began her higher education journey unsure of what to expect.

“I didn’t really know what social work was growing up,” she said. “I just knew I liked helping people, and it’s something I can do without feeling exhausted by it. It’s fun, and it’s rewarding.”

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT CYDNEE LACY](#)



Debra Mitchell-Ibe, executive program manager of Denton County Friends of the Family (Left), Adam Powell, president and CEO of United Way of Tarrant County (Center Left), Dereka Hall, director of the Dallas College Social Work Academy (Center Right) and Dr. Jandel Crutchfield, associate professor at the UTA School of Social Work (Right) pose for a photo at the “Power of Presence: Black Identity in Professional Social Work” Black History Month Panel on Feb. 5, 2026.

Panel at UTA reflects on professional identity during Black History Month

By Jaelon Jackson

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work hosted a Black History Month panel Feb. 5 titled “The Power of Presence: Black Identity in Professional Social Work,” bringing students, faculty, staff and community members together for a conversation about professional identity, leadership and lived experience in the profession.

Hosted by the UTA Social Work Black Social Work Student Alliance, the event was held in recognition of the 100th year of Black History Month. BSSWA President Natasha Sutherland opened the evening by welcoming attendees and outlining the focus of the discussion.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT THE POWER OF PRESENCE EVENT](#)



UTA School of Social Work Deans Advisory Council Members, Cathleen Jordan, Professor Emerita at The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work (Left), Raul Gonzalez, Deputy Mayor Pro Tempore and Arlington City Council District 2 Representative (Center Left), Madeline McClure, Founder and CEO Emeritus of TexProtects (Center Right) and Wayne Carson, Chief Executive Officer of ACH Child and Family Services (Right) pose for a photo. (Photo by Jaelon Jackson)

UTA School of Social Work Establishes Dean’s

Advisory Council

By Jaelon Jackson

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work has launched its Dean's Advisory Council, a new initiative that will serve as a strategic resource to the dean and the school's leadership team.

Composed of distinguished alumni, community leaders and professionals, the council is designed to offer expertise, guidance and connections that enhance the School of Social Work's impact while supporting its mission and strategic priorities.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DEAN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL](#)



Attendees gather for a UTA School of Social Work Alumni Lunch in Spring of 2025. (Courtesy Photo)

UTA School of Social Work to Host Alumni Lunch Focused on Building Impact Through Engagement

By Elizabeth Tejada

The UTA School of Social Work is hosting a time-honored alumni focused gathering titled Alumni Lunch: Building Impact Through Engagement on Friday, March 20 from noon–2:30 p.m. in the School of Social Work and Smart Hospital Building Commons Area. The event invites alumni, faculty, staff and community partners to reconnect, reflect on their progression and learn from one another.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT THE ALUMNI LUNCH](#)

Research and Faculty Highlights



UTA School of Social Work Associate Professor, Dr. Rachel Voth Schrag

When safety starts with a text message

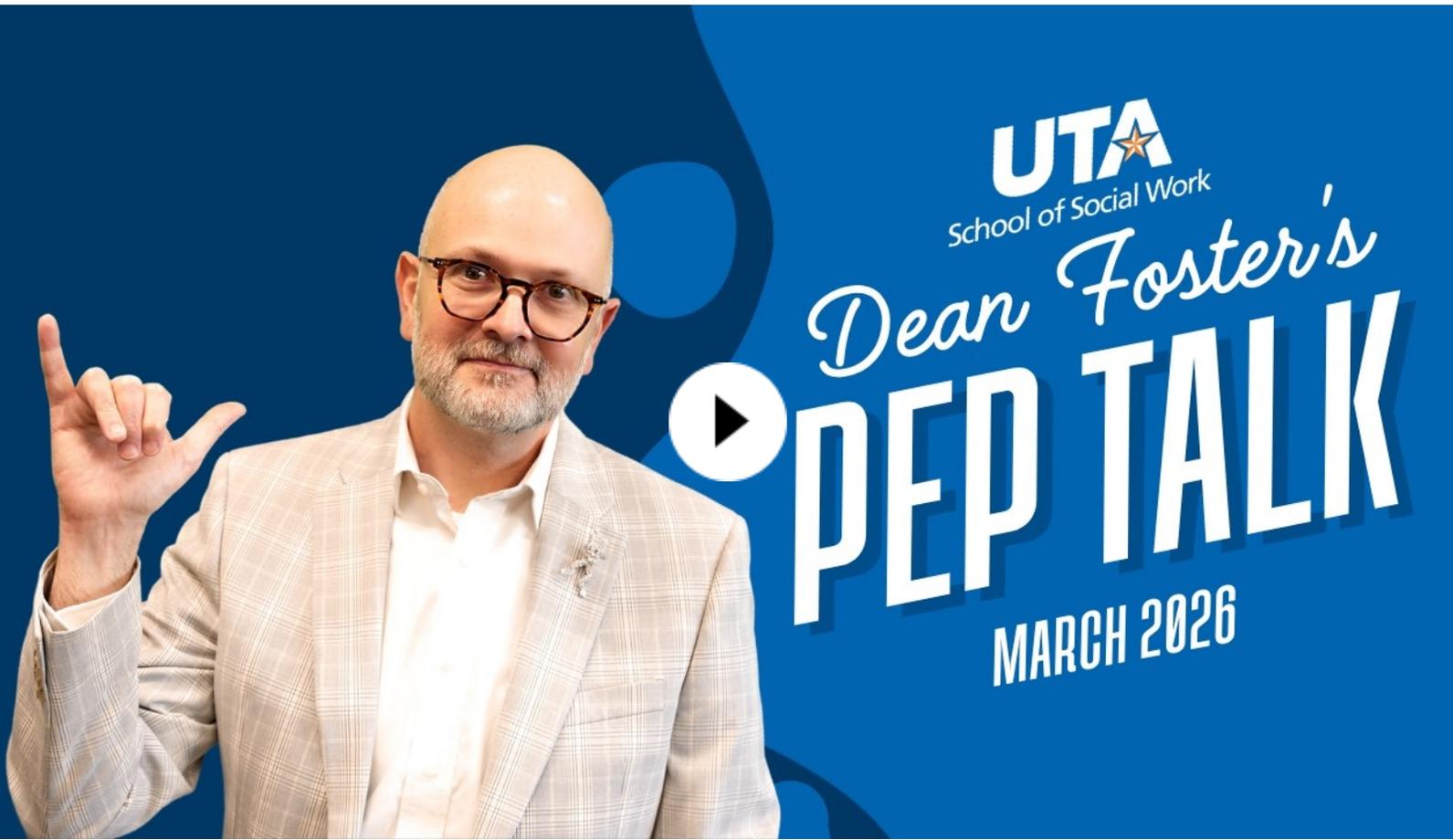
By Drew Davison

New research from The University of Texas at Arlington shows that digital hotlines are changing how survivors of domestic and sexual violence access safety planning and support.

Use of chat and text services has surged since the COVID-19 pandemic, according to [Rachel Joy Voth Schrag](#), a UT Arlington professor of social work. Understanding how survivors use these digital channels, she said, is critical for ensuring hotline advocates have the tools they need to support survivor and family safety.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT HER RESEARCH](#)

Looking Toward March



Watch the Dean's March Pep Talk to Students.

Video edited and produced by Doughlas Gutierrez

[CLICK TO WATCH THE DEAN'S MARCH PEP TALK VIDEO](#)

Upcoming SSW Events:

- **Mar 20:** [Alumni Lunch: Building Impact Through Engagement](#)
- **Mar 25:** [Virtual UTA School of Social Work Symposium](#)
- **April:** Child Abuse Prevention Month
- **Apr 2:** Indigenous Relationship to Power, Place and Contested Territories
- **Apr 3:** Last Day to Drop Classes
- **Apr 4:** [Native American Student Association Powwow](#)
- **Apr 16:** [Where Social Work Takes Us: Austin, TX](#)
- **Apr 17:** Social Work Advocacy Day
- **Apr 18:** Save the Date - A Day in the Life IPE
- **Apr 22:** [UTA MavsDay](#)
- **Apr 29:** [Child Welfare Research Center: Inaugural Symposium](#)
- **May 3:** Commencement Ceremony @ Globe Life
- **May 9:** End of the Year Celebration (Details Coming Soon)
- **May 11:** [Preventing and Intervening on Violence Over Time \(PIVOT\): Building Community](#)

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